Pollution by Generators in UP

†3974. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that heavy pollution is being caused in UP by the smoke emitted by the use of generators on a large scale due to heavy load-shedding by the people;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that apprehensions of spreading of a number of deadly diseases among the people due to pollution have increased; and

(d) if so, what action Government are going to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) The prolonged use of generators during heavy load-shedding may result in increase in the level of pollution. Regular monitoring of levels of pollution is being carried out. Generally, it is found that the level of air pollution and noise is higher than the prescribed standards at the time of operation of generator sets.

(c) and (d) The smoke exhaust from the gensets could cause health impairments. The standards for the emission norms for the gensets have been worked out for notification under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

Wasteland Reclamation Project in UP

3975. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether five wetlands in Uttar Pradesh which are home to over 33 percent of the endangered Sarus crane population, are being drained under a World Bank funded Wasteland Reclamation Project:

(b) if so, the details thereof:

(c) whether it is a fact that Wildlife Trust of India had been Resisting the project; and

(d) if so, the details of the final decision taken?

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) According to the available information, the habitats of Sarus cranes in two out of six wetlands in Mainpuri and Etawah districts of Uttar Pradesh have been affected due to draining of wetlands converting these into agricultural fields. The total cost of the project is US $ 194.1 million (Rupees 932 crores approximately).

(c) and (d) The Wilelife Trust of India has filed a Writ Petition No. 3807/ 2002 for stopping the implemen ation of the project. High Court of Allahabad has passed a stay order on 19.3.2002 asking the State Government to stop any developmental activity that adversely affects the natural habitat of Sarus cranes.

Officers under Wildlife Protection Act

3976. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons that the officers of Central Excise, Customs, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Directorate General of Central Excise Intelligence are not being declared by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, as proper officers under the Wildlife Protection Act (1972), as it may greatly assist in the effors for wildlife conservation; and

(b) whether there is any such proposal before Government at present?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) The officers of Customs, Central Excise and Revenue Intelligence are empowered to take action against the person indulging the illegal trade in wildlife and its derivatives under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962. In this background, no proposal for delegation of powers to these organisations under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 has come up for consideration of the Central Government.

Non-wood forest produce in Gujarat

3977. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state whether Government have received any proposal from the Gujarat Government regarding a project for sustainable management of non-wood forest produce?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): No specific project proposal for sustainable management of non-wood forest produce has been received from the Gujarat Government. However,